(b) No, Sir.

(c) and (d) Do not. arise.

(a) whether it is a fact that a sum of Rs. 20,000 crores will be invested in airports;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Ahmedabad Airport has been included in the list; and

(d) if so, whether the Air Indian flights including foreign flights will be permitted to land at the Airports?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Development and moedernisation of airports to meet the increasing demand of air traffic is a continuous process. AAI has formulated its plans for this purpose during the IXth Five Year Plan which envisages a total expenditure of Rs. 3308.78 crores for development of airport infrastructure. Out of the above, Rs. 1030.47 crores has been earmarked for aerodrame works, Rs. 528.84 crores for communication and navigation facilities, Rs. 155.77 crores for ground safety services and Rs. 1523.52 crores for development of international airports. All the above items of work are likely to be completed by the year 2001-2002.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) National Carriers can operate international flights from any point in India. However, Ahmedabad is at present not available as a point of call to foreign airlines.

Expansion of Air India's Service to Hong Kong

2490. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Air India's operation to Hong Kong has increased and if so, to what extent;

(b) whether it is a fact that the post of commercial officer at Hong Kong is upgraded; and

(c) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMARS (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) yes, Sir. The Commercial Manager in-charge of Hong Kong has been upgraded to the level of Regional Director and given the additional charge of other countries in the Far East, and Australasia.

Incidents of Safety Violations Involving Indian Airlines A-320 Aicrafts

2491. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the number of incidents of safety violations involving Indian Airlines Airbus 320 aicrafts over the past one year;

(b) the reasons therefor; and

(c) the measures proposed to ensure safety of passengers in A-320 Airbus?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Over the past one year, 5 incidents of airmiss and 105 incidents of general nature involving flight controls, hydraulics, power plant, landing gear, auto pilot, pressurisation, airconditioning etc. to Indian Airlines Airbus 320 were reported to the DGCA. Such incidents are investigated and appropriate follow up action is taken to avoid recurrence of the incidents.

(c) Steps are continuously taken to enhance the level of air safety such as implementation of recommendations emanating from investigation of aircraft accidents and hazardous incidents, monitoring of Flight Data Recorders, introducing additional safety guidelines and regulations, dissemination of safety information through safety seminars and workshops, surveillance by Flight Inspectors, Safety Audit of Operators, conducting of Cockpit Resource

Management (CRM) course for the flight crew, making mandatory installation of Airborne Collision Avoidance System (ACAS) and ground Proximity Warning System in the aircraft.

Augmentation of Fleet by Air India

2492. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: SHRI AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal under consideration to allow Air India to augment its fleet; if so, the details thereof indicating the number and specification of aircrafts to be acquired; and

(b) if no permission to augment the fleet is to be given, what measures Government propose to take to cut losses suffered by Air India?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Expansion/ renewal of fleet by the two airlines is a continuing exercise and depends on various factors, the more important ones being the resources of the airlines, traffic requirements, suitability of the aircraft type and viability of operations of various sectors/routes.

Operation of flights in the North-Eastern Region

2493. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for not operating evening flight between Guwahati and Delhi;

(b) the reasons for operating flight to Dibrugarh, Silehar, Dimapur, Tezpur, and Jorhat only from Calcutta by passing Guwahati;

(c) the progress made towards making Guwahati a regional hub for North-East as per PM's declaration and the time by which this is scheduled to be operative; and

(d) the details of the plan and the present status of the regional air service network proposed to link important towns of North-East from Guwahati?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): (a) and (b) Airlines generally select the timings and the sectors depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability of the flights subject to compliance with the route dispersal guidelines which provide for at least 10% of the operator's capacity deployed on Category-I (Trunk routes) to be made available for the North-East, Jammu & Kashmir, Lakshadweep Islands and Andaman & Nicobar Islands.

(c) and (d) Government is conscious of the problems of the North East region and is closely monitoring the development of airlinks and infrastructure.

The details of the existing routes schedule of operations in the North-Eastern region is given in the Statement.